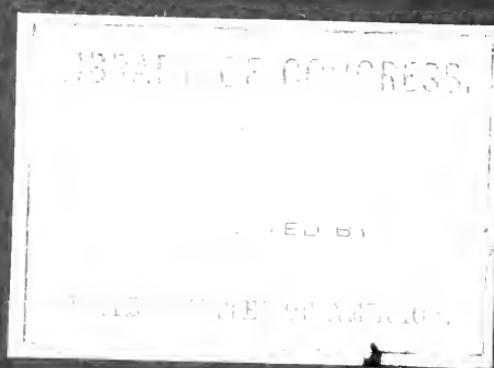


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HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF  
MIDDLETOWN R. I.

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AN

# Historical Sketch

OF

MIDDLETON, R. I.,

FROM ITS  
ORGANIZATION, IN 1743,

TO THE  
CENTENNIAL YEAR, 1876.

—BY—

HON. SAMUEL GREENE ARNOLD.

—O—

NEWPORT :  
JOHN P. SANBORN & Co., MERCURY STEAM PRINTING HOUSE.  
1876.



*A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE TOWN  
COUNCIL INVITING*

HON. SAMUEL GREENE ARNOLD,

TO PREPARE AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE  
TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN.

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At a meeting of the Town Council of Middletown, held  
in said town, on Monday, October 16th, A. D. 1876:

*Resolved*, That, in view of the fact that this town was unable to secure in July last the preparation of an historical sketch of this town from the date of its formation, as recommended by Congress and our State Legislature, that the Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, of this town, be and he is hereby invited to prepare such an historical sketch of this town at his earliest convenience, and that the clerk of this Council be and he is hereby directed to communicate to Mr. Arnold the invitation herein contained, by forwarding to him a copy of this resolution.

A true copy—attest:

ALBERT L. CHASE, *Council Clerk.*

A RESOLUTION OF THANKS TO  
HON. SAMUEL G. ARNOLD,  
FOR HIS HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Also, a resolution authorizing the Town Clerk to have the same printed.

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At a meeting of the Town Council of Middletown, held in said town, on Monday, December 18th, A.D. 1876:

*Resolved*, That the Town Council would hereby respectfully acknowledge the condescension and labors of the Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, in preparing an historical sketch of the town of Middletown, from the date of its formation, and do further hereby extend to him their unfeigned thanks for the same.

*Resolved*, That the Town Clerk of Middletown be and he is hereby authorized and directed at the proper expense of this town, to have printed and bound in a suitable manner, 500 copies of the Historical Sketch of the Town of Middletown, as recently prepared by the Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, and to place fifty copies thereof at the disposal of the historian, the said Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, to file one copy thereof with the Records in the Town Clerk's Office, one copy with the Secretary of State, one copy with the Librarian of Congress, to forward one copy thereof to the clerk of each town or city in this State, to retain fifty copies thereof for the use of such historical writers or collectors as may hereafter apply for the same, and to hold the remainder of said copies for distribution among the citizens, tax-payers and inhabitants of this town.

True copies—attest:

ALBERT L. CHASE, *Council Clerk.*

# THE HISTORY.



## THE HISTORY.

The agitation in Massachusetts which resulted in the banishment of Roger Williams and the settlement of Providence, in 1636, had scarcely ceased when the Antinomian controversy commenced. Female influence upon the progress of thought and the destiny of States was never more signally manifested than in this struggle between the Puritan theology and the more liberal ideas inculcated by Mrs. Ann Hutchinson. Beginning with theological differences, more appreciated in a polemic age, like the seventeenth century, than they would be in our time, the breach between the Legalists and the Antinomians rapidly widened. The former party embraced the older settlers and all the clergy but two in the colony ; the latter included most of the Boston church, with Cotton at its head, and Wheelwright of Braintree, the brother-in-law of Mrs. Hutchinson, as the only ministers on that side. The new comers, who were numerous, joined the popular party, whose leader was the young and ambitious Governor, afterwards Sir Henry Vane. From a purely theological discussion, the dispute soon spread to the broader arena of polities. Obnoxious laws were enacted by the dominant faction, and were opposed by those who desired a wider field of action. For two years this strife was waged with all the bitterness of polemic warfare, and with the asperity of a political contest. But the spirit of free thought which

had been awakened, was suddenly checked by one false step on the part of Wheelwright, who had been pronounced guilty of sedition and contempt by the General Court, and who threatened an appeal to the King in case the court should proceed to sentence him. The dread of interference from England, where their enemies were in power, was as great in the minds of the new comers as with the older colonists. The change in popular sentiment was rapid and entire. Cotton went over to the stronger party. The Antinomians were disarmed. Wheelwright was banished, and the same punishment was soon after inflicted upon Mrs. Hutchinson. Many of the other leaders were disfranchised, among whom were William Aspinwall, John Coggeshall, William Balstone, and Captain Underhill, a hero of the Pequot war. William Coddington, then a deputy from Boston, fell under the displeasure of the court. Many of the ablest and best of the Puritan colonists were scattered abroad by this, the fiercest strife, which has ever distracted New England. For the love of peace, and to enjoy freedom of conscience, these men, twice exiled for opinion's sake, resolved to emigrate. With John Clarke and William Coddington as their leaders, they came to Providence, and on the advice and with the aid of Roger Williams, they purchased from the Indians the beautiful island of Aquedneck. On the twenty-fourth of March, 1638, they began a settlement at Pocasset, on the northeast part of the island. So rapid was the increase of this colony, that in the following year it was decided to form a new settlement on the southwest part of the island. Nicholas Easton, with his two sons, Peter and John, were the pioneers of this enterprise. On the first of May, 1639, they landed at Newport, and on the 16th the town was laid out and named, and the dividing line from Pocasset was established at a point

about five miles north and east of the town, near the centre of the island.

There were nine signers of the compact of emigration, framed at Pocasset on the twenty-eighth of April, 1639. These were:

WILLIAM CODDINGTON, Judge.

NICHOLAS EASTON, }  
JOHN COGGESHALL, }  
WILLIAM BRENTON, }  
JOHN CLARKE, - } Elders.  
JEREMY CLERKE, - }  
THOMAS HAZARD, }  
HENRY BULL, }

WILLIAM DYRE, Clerk.

These constituted the first government of Newport. The larger portion remained at Pocasset and organized a new government on the thirtieth of April, under William Hutchinson as Judge, with seven Assistants. They changed the Indian name of the place to Portsmouth. The separate governments of Portsmouth and Newport continued for about ten months, when they were united on the twelfth of March, 1640, at the first "General Court of Election." The titles of Judge and Elders were changed to Governor and Assistants. William Coddington, of Newport, was chosen Governor, William Brenton, of Portsmouth, Deputy Governor, with four Assistants, two Treasurers and two Constables equally divided between the towns. William Dyer, of Newport, was chosen Secretary of the colony, and Henry Bull, Sergeant. Portsmouth was the more populous settlement. Five men from that town, and three from Newport, were selected to lay out the lands. In the original lay-out of Pocasset, six acres of land were apportioned to each inhabitant, which was soon after reduced one half. At Newport, four acres were assigned for each house lot, and six acres

were granted to Mr. Coddington for an orchard—the second planted in the State. One hundred acres were appropriated for school lands.

Of the startling principles of government established on the island, embodying the novel ideas of liberty already incorporated at Providence, it is unnecessary to say much. Familiarity with these theories, now confirmed by two hundred and forty years of successful application, and become the recognized system of the American continent, renders more than a mere allusion to them uncalled for in this place. “It is ordered and unanimously agreed upon, that the Government which this Bodie Politiek doth attend unto in this Island, and the Jurisdiction thereof, in favor of our Prince is a DEMOCRACIE, or Popular Government; that is to say, It is in the Powre of the Body of Freemen, orderly assembled, or the major part of them, to make or constitute Just Laws, by which they will be regulated, and to depute from among themselves such Ministers as shall see them faithfully executed between Man and Man.” This was the remarkable manifesto of civil rights put forth at the second general court of election in March, 1641. It was followed by an equally memorable declaration of religious liberty. “It was further ordered, by the authority of this present Courte, that none be accounted a Delinquent *for Doctrine*.” Here were the two distinctive, and at that day, entirely novel features in a State constitution, which make the rise of Rhode Island an era not alone in American history, but in the political experience of mankind.

In 1644, the name of Acquedneck was dropped and that of Rhode-island was adopted, which has since been extended to the State. Meanwhile, in March of that year, a Parliamentary charter had been obtained by Roger Williams, uni-

ting the several settlements in the State under the style of "The Incorporation of Providence Plantations in the Narraganset Bay in New England," but the colonial government was not organized under this patent till May, 1647.

The New England League, from which Rhode Island was basely excluded by the parties who claimed jurisdiction over the now organized and independent colony, and the covert ambition of Coddington, who sought to detach the island from the mainland towns and erect it into a separate government, with himself at its head, imperilled the existence of the State. Early in 1649 Coddington sailed for England, and after two years returned, to the consternation of the whole colony, with a commission for life as governor of the islands of Rhode Island and Conanicut. The patent was thus virtually annulled, the colonial government destroyed, and the islands given over to a usurper. John Clarke and Roger Williams were at once sent to England by the alarmed colonists, the former to obtain a revocation of the commission of Coddington, the latter to secure a confirmation of the charter. They sailed together from Boston, worked together in England, and triumphed together in the end. Coddington's commission was revoked by an order of Council, October 2d, 1652. But the divisions in the colony were not healed, nor a reunion under the old patent effected for nearly two years, till the return of Mr. Williams in the summer of 1654. He was chosen President of the colony at the next election. Dr. Clarke remained abroad nearly thirteen years as agent of the colony, and after the restoration of the Stuarts, obtained from Charles II. the royal charter of July 8th, 1663. By this the corporate title was changed to "The English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England, in America." Under this charter,

the freest and most republican instrument that ever emanated from the throne of a monarch, the State existed for one hundred and eighty years, passing safely through the colonial and the revolutionary periods down to our day. Under it Newport became, with the exception of Boston, the most flourishing commercial town in America. It was the centre of a circle, embracing the island and the Narraganset country, which revived in the New World the traditions and customs of the Old in all that pertained to the amenities of social life. Education was early promoted, and as enterprise expanded and wealth increased, Art was encouraged and scholarship was recognized and honored. The sports of English country life and the studies of the English schools were pursued with equal ardor. A society as refined as could anywhere be found, was centered in Newport towards the middle of the eighteenth century. To this society there came in the winter of 1729-30, a great addition in the person of George Berkeley, dean of Derry, and afterwards bishop of Cloyne. So intimately associated is this great name with the town where he made his temporary abode, that no apology is necessary for dwelling at some length upon what proved so interesting an event. He was accompanied by a staff of scholars and artists proposed as the faculty of a college he sought to establish in Bermuda. The failure of his scheme resulted in benefit to the colonies by the stimulus which these men gave to learning and art in New England. After a few months residence in Newport, most of his companions moved to Boston, but Berkeley remained. Purchasing a farm of ninety-six acres, about three miles from town, on the eastern slope of Honeyman's hill, in what is now Middletown, he built a comfortable country house in the English style of those days. Here, at the age

of forty-four, he established himself with his lately married wife, and here two children were born to him, one of whom, dying in infancy, was buried in the grave-yard of Trinity church. How genial was the life at Newport in the times of which we are now writing, may be seen in a brief extract from Fraser's *Life and Works of Berkeley*. (1) In that exquisite chapter entitled "A recluse in Rhode Island," which reads like an idyl, the author says:

"The Rhode Island aristocracy of Berkeley's time maintained the character of the old English country gentlemen, from whom they were descended. A state of society, supported by slavery, produced festivity. Tradition records the genial life of those days in the colony. Excursions to Hartford to luxuriate on bloated salmon were annual indulgences in May. Pace races on the beach for silver tankards were the social indulgences of summer. When autumn arrived, there were harvest-home festivities. Large numbers of both sexes gathered on those occasions. Gentlemen in their scarlet coats and swords, with laced ruffles over their hands, silk stockings, and shoes ornamented with silver buckles, and ladies dressed in brocade, with high-heeled shose and high head-dresses. These festivities would sometimes continue for days, and they were shared by the slaves as well as their masters. Christmas was the great festival of the year; twelve days were then given to hospitalities. The wedding, too, was a great gala in the olden time. And the fox chase, with hounds and horns, as well as fishing and fowling, were favorite sports in Narragansett."

Berkeley's country home he named from the residence of the English King's—Whitehall. It adjoined the farm of the Rev. James Honeyman, the first missionary sent to America by the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts. The name is still retained, and the house is yet standing, an object of interest to all strangers visiting the now famous watering place, and a sort of Mecca for all philosophical students from both hemispheres. For nearly two years that Berkeley remained in Rhode Island, his time was studi-

1. *The Works of George Berkeley, D. D.* by Alexander Campbell Fraser, A. M., in Four Vols. Oxford, 1871.

ously employed. Here he wrote some of his most celebrated works. Of these, "Alciphron or the Minute Philosopher" was wholly written in Rhode Island, and abounds in descriptions of life and scenery in the vicinity. "The first page of *Alciphron* represents Berkeley in the last year of his family life at Whitehall. The whole book represents his studies there, in the library, in the field, and on the sea shore," says his biographer. This work is "An Apology for the Christian Religion against those who are called Free-thinkers." To combat the progress of materialism, and subvert the Epicurean theories of Hobbs, Berkeley had become the champion of the immaterial system of philosophy, and argued the non-existence of matter, or rather its entire subjection to the ideal. *Alciphron* is divided into seven dialogues, held between four friends, of whom two advocate atheism, while the others defend religion, and in their warm, free and earnest conversation, the high argument is evolved. A single brief extract may be allowed in this place as illustrating one feature of the social life of those days:

"We had hardly seated ourselves and looked about us, when we saw a fox run by the foot of our mount into an adjacent thicket. A few minutes after, we heard a confused noise of the opening of hounds, and winding of horns, and the roaring of country squires. While our attention was suspended by this event, a servant came running, out of breath, and told Crito that his neighbor Ctesippus, a squire of note, was fallen from his horse, attempting to leap over a ledge, and brought into the hall, where he lay for dead. Upon which we all rose and walked hastily to the house, where we found Ctesippus just come to himself, in the midst of half a dozen sun-burnt squires in frocks, and short wigs, and jockey-boots. Being asked how he did, he answered it was only a broken rib. With some difficulty Crito persuaded him to lie on a bed till the chirurgeon came. These fox-hunters, having been up early at their sport, were eager for dinner, which was accordingly hastened. They passed the afternoon in a loud, rustic mirth, gave proof of their relig-

ion and loyalty by the healths they drank, talked of hounds, and horses, and elections, and country fairs, till the chirurgeon, who had been employed about Ctesippus, desired he might be put into Crito's coach, and sent home, having refused to stay all night."

One more extract from Berkeley's works may be permitted. The short poem whose concluding stanza has made it immortal, was probably written at this time, and associates Berkeley's Rhode Island home with the finest inspiration of his muse :

VERSES  
ON THE  
PROSPECT OF PLANTING ARTS AND LEARNING  
IN  
AMERICA.

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The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime  
Barren of every glorious theme,  
In distant lands now waits a better time,  
Producing subjects worthy fame.

In happy climes, where from the genial sun  
And virgin earth such scenes ensue,  
The force of art by nature seems outdone,  
And fancied beauties by the true;

In happy climes, the seat of innocence,  
Where nature guides and virtue rules,  
Where men shall not impose for truth and sense  
The pedantry of courts and schools;

There shall be sung another golden age,  
The rise of empire and of arts,  
The good and great inspiring epic rage.  
The wisest heads and noblest hearts.

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay ;  
Such as she bred when fresh and young,  
When heavenly flame did animate her clay.  
By future poets shall be sung.

Westward the course of empire takes its way ;  
The four first Acts already past,  
A fifth shall close the Drama with the day ;  
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

In the autumn of 1731, Berkeley prepared to return to England, after a residence of less than two years in America. But he has left behind him an impression such as few men have anywhere made in so short a time. He founded a philosophical society in Newport, whose books formed the basis of the Redwood Library, incorporated in 1747. Tradition points to a beetling cliff at the second beach, known as the Hanging Rock, as the favorite resort of the Christian philosopher, where he composed a great part of the *Aleiphron* : and popular fancy has given to this romantic spot the name of Berkeley's Cave. Whatever of classic association pervades the vicinity of his island home, and consecrates these beautiful shores, is due to the genius, and twines around the memory of George Berkeley.

The population of Newport in 1730 was 4640, having more than doubled within twenty-two years since the first census ever taken in the colony in 1708. That it was growing rapidly is shown by the succeeding census, eighteen years later, when it numbered 6508, notwithstanding the loss of over six hundred by the division of the town ; for in 1748, the first census after the separation, Middletown had 680 inhabitants. The almost complete destruction of the Newport records leaves us to conjecture that the movement of the rural districts, of the north and east of the compact part of the town, for a separate organization, had its origin in the usual

occasion for such divisions, the inequality in the distribution of taxes. Two mutilated fragments of the records show that the question was discussed in town meeting and the petition for a division rejected, and that at a later meeting a committee was appointed to examine and report on the case :

“At a town meeting called at ye<sup>e</sup> request [of a] number of ye<sup>e</sup> inhabitants of ye<sup>e</sup> woods November 16, 17 [41? upon the] Petition of a number of ye<sup>e</sup> inhabitants of [the woods] being read for dividing ye<sup>e</sup> town. It was put [to vote] whether ye<sup>e</sup> town should be divided into two parts.

Voted that it should not be divided.”

The deputies were directed to oppose the petition for division, Jan. 26, 1742.

“Voted—That the General Assembly of [the colony be invited] to inspect into the circumstances of the town [and] see if there be a necessity of dividing ye<sup>e</sup> [town, and if] there be, in what manner, and make [report at] ye<sup>e</sup> next sessions of Assembly. Be served [with a copy] of ye<sup>e</sup> said General Assembly’s Act, and said town Rodman to get ye<sup>e</sup> copy of ye<sup>e</sup> sd. act of Assembly and deliver [it to] said gentlemen [who are instructed] to enter upon said affair and to determine.”

This is all in relation to the subject that now appears upon the Newport records. But “ye<sup>e</sup> inhabitants of ye<sup>e</sup> woods” carried their point. At the June session, 1743, the General Assembly passed

“An Act for dividing the town of Newport, in the county of Newport, into two towns.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of this colony, and by the authority thereof it is enacted, that the said town of Newport, be divided into two towns; and the division to begin at the head of the creek that separates the two farms of the Hon. Joseph Whipple, Esq., and Godfrey Malbone, of said

Newport, merchant; and so to extend upon a direct line between the two houses of Elisha Card, and that in the possession of Samuel Pemberton, Esq., and from thence on a straight line to the place where the creek on Easton's beach runs into the sea; and all to the southward and westward of the said line, to belong to the town of Newport; and all to the northward and eastward of said line to be incorporated into a town by the name of Middletown.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that John Dexter, Esq., Messrs. Benjamin Peckham, Jr., and Samuel Easton, surveyor, be, and they are hereby appointed a committee, they, or the major part of them, to run the aforesaid line, and make report to the next session of this Assembly."

The act of incorporation was passed at the next session in August, as follows:

"An Act for incorporating the north-east part of the town of Newport into a township, and the same to be distinguished and known by the name of Middletown.

Whereas, the General Assembly, at their session held by adjournment at Newport, within and for said colony, on the second Monday in June last past, did, among other things, enact that the town of Newport should be divided into two towns; and for that purpose appointed a committee to run the dividing line, and make report thereon to this present session of the Assembly, who have accordingly reported that they have done the same, in the following manner:

Beginning at the head of the creek that separates the two farms of the Hon. Joseph Whipple, Esq., and Godfrey Malbone of said Newport, merchant; and on a south course, nineteen degrees and one half east, run a direct line, extending to the north-east corner of a lot of land belonging to Job Almy, of said Newport, merchant: the said corner being between the houses of Elisha Card and that in the possession of Samuel Pemberton: and from said corner a straight line south, twenty-seven degrees east, crossing the bridge that lieth over the creek on Easton's beach; and so into the sea on that course, it being the place where the said creek usually runs into the sea.

And the said report being accepted:

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of this colony, and by the authority of the same it is enacted, that all the lands to the southward and westward of the said line, as before

described, belong to the town of Newport: and all the land to the northward and eastward of said line be distinguished and known by the name of Middletown; and that the inhabitants of said Middletown, from time to time shall have and enjoy the like benefits, liberties, privileges and immunities with other towns in this colony, according to charter.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the justices of the peace, living within the aforesaid town of Middletown, shall remain and continue in their aforesaid offices until the next general election; and that the first of said justices of the peace grant forth his warrant to call the inhabitants of said Middletown together on Tuesday next, being the 20th day of August instant, to elect and appoint said town officers as they shall have occasion for, and the law directs; and to appoint the times and places of their town meetings; and to choose and elect two deputies to represent them at the next General Assembly, and so on, as by the charter is directed.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that said town of Middletown shall send one grand and three petit jurors to the superior court of judicature, court of assize and general jail delivery; and three grand and three petit jurors to every inferior court of common pleas and general sessions of the peace held within the county of Newport; and that the town of Newport shall hereafter send to each of the aforesaid courts so many jurors less of what they are now compelled by law, as is ordered to be sent by the aforesaid town of Middletown."

Under this Act the division between the towns was made August 24th, 1743. The first town meeting was held August 30th, and the organization was perfected by the election of two deputies to the General Assembly, a town clerk, town treasurer, town sergeant, six councilmen, three constables, one packer, one sealer of weights and measures, three ratemakers, two overseers of the poor, four surveyors of highways, three fence viewers, one vendue master, one pound keeper, three field drivers, three viewers of flax and hemp, two wood eorders—thirty-eight officers of seventeen classes—and they also appointed a committee to erect a pound. The first meeting of the town council was held September 12th,

at which licenses to sell liquors were granted to three men upon their giving bonds to keep order, and John Champlain was licensed "to retail strong liquors those days that the council sits at his house." Meetings of the council were established for the third Monday in each month, at 10 o'clock in the morning, but this hour was soon after changed to eleven, with a fine of six pence for delay or absence without good excuse. The council acted as a court of probate, board of health, overseers of the poor, and commissioners of licenses, and also decided who might become inhabitants of the town. Beyond these duties and the laying out and repairing of highways, there is little of interest in the council proceedings, which occupy seven volumes of records. Matters of general interest were always discussed in town meetings, the records of which are contained in three large volumes. There is an old volume of Proprietors records extending from 1702 to 1756, which describes the common lands, and records the disposition made of them. These commons were in several parcels—the town common of one hundred and one acres on the main road, fifty-eight on the west side, and forty-three on the east, including a six acre school lot—Lenthal's plain common of two hundred twenty-eight and a half acres, Clarke's common, being part of the bequest of Dr. John Clarke for charitable uses—Sachuest neck and beach and the adjoining rocky lands—land on the southwest neck, besides Goat and Coaster's Harbor islands. Most of these were divided by a committee of fourteen men appointed by the Proprietors January 12th, 1701-2, who on the 11th of February proposed:

1st—That two lots of six acres each be set off as school land.

2d—That six acres more be set off for school land on "the common near the pound."

3d—That one acre near the town be set off for a prison, and one acre for an almshouse and house of correction. The other propositions relate to the mode of division among the Proprietors—a shilling an acre, to cover expenses, to be paid by each person to whom land is awarded. A list of one hundred and eleven names of those entitled to whole shares of land appears in the records. On 12th March 1701-2 Samuel Cranston and Nathaniel Coddington were appointed to survey the undivided lands. June, 17th, the Proprietors agreed that the common adjoining William Barker and others there should be for the rocky land allowed to the eastward of the second ledge of rocks one half for the rocks, and the neighborhood should have liberty to dig and cart away of the stones of that common for their use if they have any occasion for them, and what rocks to the westward of the ledge the surveyors or committee to give allowance at their discretion.” (1) The surveys being completed in July, the work of division began. On the 31st, four acres were set apart on Goat Island upon which to build a fort. In December the divided lands were confirmed to the grantees by vote of the Proprietors. The next year, in June, 1703, some lands on the southwest neck that had not yet been laid out, were surveyed and divided, and in August, 1704, the same was done with Goat and Coaster’s Harbor islands. The Proprietors kept up their organization after these divisions, but very rarely met. On the 26th of February, 1744, by a formal vote they unanimously agreed “to relinquish up to the town of Middletown all their right and title in the lands lying on Sachuest beach, to be by the said town managed from time to time forever hereafter as an estate belonging to said town.” The last record of the Proprietors is dated

1. This clause is quoted on p. 373, Vol. 2, of Town Meeting records in the Report of a Committee “to enquire into all the roads and commonages in said town,” made April 20th, 1836.

1756, April 21. John Barker was chosen clerk, and a committee was appointed to transfer to him from the widow of the late clerk, Edward Easton, the Proprietor's records. Most of the lands had long since been divided, and the greater part of those which remained in common had been conveyed to the town of Middletown twelve years before. The association of Proprietors became extinct.

In November, 1743, the first tax, of £200, for town expenses, was voted.

A committee was appointed to draft ordinances for the town government, and the clerk was ordered to provide a pair of stocks and whipping post. The elections for town officers were appointed to be held on the second Wednesday in May, and a list of eighty-four freemen was enrolled. In March following, it was voted to pay twenty pounds each to Col. Daniel Updike and James Honeyman, Jr., for their services done for this town." This service was rendered in procuring the act of incorporation. A committee to settle accounts with Newport was chosen. Acts were passed for impounding cattle and sheep, regulating surveyors of highways, and giving a bounty of eight pence for the destruction of crows, and three pence for black birds, from April 1st to June 10th. Four years later, this bounty was increased to eighteen pence for crows and eight for blackbirds, and in 1749 the act was repealed. Free inhabitants, or housekeepers, were to work the roads for three days in September. Action was taken on building a bridge over the creek at Easton's beach, and on repairing the school house.

Freemen were admitted, jurors drawn and deputies elected at the April and August meetings, and town officers were chosen in May. In August, 1744, a proposition to sue Newport for the town's rights in Goat and Coaster's Harbor

islands was made, but a vigorous protest, signed by twenty freemen, on the ground that these places belonged to Newport in the division, put an end to the unjust claim. In May, 1745, the town formally accepted the grant of Sachuest common made by the Proprietors the preceding February. The next year the beach was sold to Jonathan Easton for £237.18. There were at this time two school houses in the town. A teacher was engaged for one year, to occupy each house half the time, and to keep school five days in the week. His salary was to be paid by the rent of the school lands, and by a weekly charge for tuition, and in case these sources did not suffice, then by a draft on the town treasurer for the balance due.

A peculiarity of those days was the oath against bribery, which, by a law of the colony passed at the August session, 1746, was required to be taken by all freemen. The statute required an oath to be administered to every voter, and another to be taken by every officer, not to receive or offer bribes in any manner. A single vote cast for any officer under such circumstances, should invalidate his election, and in all trials under the Act, the evidence of the person offering the bribe might be taken against the accused. The law was to be read in town meeting at each semi-annual election for five years, and the name of any violator of it was to be struck from the roll of freemen.

Questions relating to the schools have been the subject of frequent controversy in the town, from its organization down to a recent date. At first the schools were in charge of a committee, but in May, 1747, "they were put in the hands of the town council, and in August their management was taken from the council, and a teacher was hired by the town meeting. The next year the business was properly intrusted

again to a committee. This arrangement continued till August, 1754, when it was

“Voted, That the late method of managing the two schools in this town be altered, and that for the future they be managed as follows, viz:—that the town be divided into two squadrons, one house in each squadron, and that each squadron shall have the sole power of managing their own school house and lands by leasing out the same, and employing schoolmasters as it shall be most agreeable to them, and the dividing line between the squadrons shall be along the highway from the south end of Moon’s lane and so northward along the east highway to Portsmouth, by James Mitchell’s shop.”

The schools thus passed into the hands of their separate districts, or “squadrons” as they were termed, which system continued till the reorganization of the school system of the State in 1845.

Town meetings were held alternately in the east and west school-houses. They were called by the town sergeant notifying each freeman personally till 1752, when the plan of posting notices in public places was permanently adopted. Fifteen days’ notice was required by this ordinance, and the notices usually stated the purpose of the meeting.

In May, 1746, the small pox appeared in the town, and the council, acting as a board of health, took vigorous measures to prevent its spreading. The lane leading to the infected spot was closed by a fence, a guard was stationed near by, with orders to kill all dogs and cattle at or near the place, and a very thorough course of purification was adopted in the house. There was no more trouble from this cause for twenty-eight years.

The opening of highways, as it is a subject of the greatest public importance, has always been a source of contention in Middletown. Not a road of any consequence has ever been projected, that has not been opposed, either by that

narrow prejudice which fails to discern in a direct benefit to one portion of a community the real good of all, or else by a dogged obstinacy which sets up the will of the individual against the wishes or the prosperity of the whole. Anxious sessions of the Council have often resulted in referring these questions to the final decisions of town meetings, and years have elapsed before a necessary improvement has been effected, and then at greater cost and trouble in the end than would have sufficed to open half a dozen roads. Let one example of the truth of these remarks be followed in detail through the records, at the risk of being tedious. January 18th, 1747-8, a petition was presented to the Council to open a road from Easton's beach to Sachuest. February 15th this petition was rejected. The petitioners appealed to the General Assembly, and in October the Council appointed a committee to prepare an answer to the petition before the Assembly. On the 20th March following, the report of this committee was referred, and on the 18th December it was rejected. On the 24th February, a memorial to the General Assembly in regard to this road was prepared. Three days later, the Assembly adopted a report of their committee that a driftway was sufficient and an open highway was not required. This was a defeat of the petitioners for an open highway, but it virtually established the road. May 21, 1750, a new committee was appointed by the Council to again lay out the road. Five days later the report of that committee was accepted, and seven pounds damages were awarded to Jonathan Easton, whose land the road crossed. Easton appealed from this award, and on 18th June a jury was warned to hear this appeal. On 4th August a warrant was issued to summon this jury. They met on the 13th and sustained the lay out. A suit was then brought by the town

against Easton for expenses in re-laying out the road. Easton then petitioned the General Assembly, and on 19th November the Council appointed a committee to answer Easton's petition before the Assembly. On the first of December this committee reported to the Council, and their answer was ordered to be sent to the General Assembly. January 21st the town treasurer was ordered to sue Easton for the expenses of the last lay out of the road. The contest before the Assembly did not result in a manner satisfactory to the town, and on May 20th, 1751, a further reply to Easton's petition to the Assembly was ordered to be made, and an attorney to be employed for the town. The case went against the town, and August 17, 1752, Easton having got judgment against the town council for his cost in petitioning the Assembly for relief about the driftway, the Council petitioned the General Assembly for stay of execution. Thus for more than five years the town was involved in useless litigation, harassed by the wilfulness of one obstinate land-owner, and finally by the direct interposition of the General Assembly received a road which the public interest demanded, but which vacillation on one side and perverseness on the other had so long held in abeyance.

But more serious subjects were soon to engage the attention and employ the combative energies of the townsmen. In 1754 the alarm of war summoned the young men of America to arms. The attempt of the commissioners at Paris to define the boundaries of the French and English possessions in North America had failed. The advanced posts of the rival nations were pushed nearer to each other. Fort Duquesne was built by the French on the site of Pittsburgh. An expedition against that point, led by Lieutenant-Colonel George Washington, with a detachment of Virginia

volunteers, surprised the advance guard of the French near the Great Meadows, on the night of the twenty-seventh of May, and begun a war more wide spread in its range and more momentous in its results than any conflict of modern times. The struggle for the possession of the Ohio Valley, then a remote and little known region in the American wilderness, was to involve the whole world in war, and at the end of nine years to result in driving the French entirely from the Western continent, in founding a great British empire in India, in establishing the Prussian monarchy in Europe, and in giving to England the supremacy of the seas, and to her American colonies the discipline and the stimulus necessary, a few years later, for successful revolt. Throughout the colonies recruiting was active. An expedition against Crown Point was planned, and in March, 1755, Rhode Island sent four hundred men, under Col. Christopher Harris, to join the army of Sir William Johnson, assembled in the Mohawk country for this purpose. Braddock's defeat on the 9th of July spread consternation through the colonies and called for renewed efforts to arrest the threatened triumph of the French. A special session of the Assembly was convened, and three additional companies of fifty men each, in excess of the Rhode Island quota, were equipped and sent to Albany. On the eighth of September, the day of General Lyman's victory at Lake George, Gov. Hopkins called another special session of the Assembly. Still more troops were required, and four additional companies were raised by this colony. Col. Harris's regiment was increased to 750 men in eleven companies. It was a heavy strain upon the already exhausted people, but it was bravely met. Three men was the proportion allotted to Middletown in this last levy, and a bounty of £180 was voted to them in addition to that offered by the

colony. To raise this sum a tax of £200 was assessed. James Phillips advanced £100, half the amount, and eighty pounds more were paid on the spot by other townsmen. The next year, upon a further levy of troops, £700 bounty was voted for the seven men required from this town, and this was increased in January, 1757, to £1634. The rapid depreciation of the colonial paper issues may account for this increase of bounty. In April, 1758, twelve men were enlisted for the new campaign, in which the Rhode Island regiment was increased to one thousand men, and £500 bounty was paid to them. This was the last levy of troops in this town during the war, that appears upon the records.

For ten years nothing of note occurred in the affairs of the town. In the meantime the colony, while exhausting its resources in the prosecution of the war, was distracted by a bitter political contest at home. The struggle between the rival parties, headed respectively by Samuel Ward and Stephen Hopkins, had continued with alternating success for thirteen years. Into the conflict between town and country, hard money and paper, peace and war, there entered the sharper elements of personal enmity, till even the amenities of social life were sacrificed to the spirit of party. But suddenly the shadow of a mightier struggle, the end whereof no human eye could foresee, was thrown across the path of the colonists. In the presence of this portentous gloom, the strife of party ceased. The two popular governors both withdrew, and a fusion of the rival parties was effected in the interest of peace at home, and for resistance to aggressions by the British ministry. At a town meeting, January 6th, 1768, a plan presented by the people of Newport to encourage colonial industry, frugality, and domestic manufactures, was adopted. The following vote was passed, looking to the

reconciliation of parties, which was effected a few weeks later. "Whereas this colony hath for several years past been unhappily divided by party and faction, the consequences of which were pernicious and tend to the entire destruction of this once happy, flourishing colony. It is therefore voted by this town meeting that our Representatives take the same into consideration, and use their utmost endeavors for a conciliation of parties before the next general election."

There were still some unsettled sources of disagreement in the town. Sachuest beach had been sold to Jonathan Easton in 1746, but the town claimed a common right to take seaweed, which was disputed by Easton. November 18th, 1771, the Council called a town meeting, held on the 21st, at which it was decided to defend Isaac Smith in a suit brought against him by Easton for taking seaweed.

In January, 1774, the people of Newport called the first meeting in the colony to oppose the introduction of tea by the East India Company, and requested the other towns to do the same. Middletown followed on the 9th of February, with the following resolutions, the most concise of any that were adopted:

"Mr. John Clarke, Moderator. The town came into the following resolves;—1. Resolved, That we will have nothing to do with the East India Company's irksome tea, nor any other subject to the like duty. 2. Resolved, That we will heartily unite with our American Brethren in supporting the inhabitants of this continent in all their just rights and privileges; and we do disown any right in the Parliament of Great Britain to tax America. Voted and passed. Witness, John Barker, town clerk."

In November the small pox again appeared. The cases were sent to the alms house at Coaster's Harbor. The same

precautions were adopted as during the previous epidemic. Two years prior to this it had been brought to Newport by a vessel, and the question of adopting the Turkish preventive of inoculation had agitated the community. The Representatives from this town had been instructed to oppose in the General Assembly its introduction into the colony: while in Newport town meetings were held on four successive days, and in only one did the advocates of inoculation obtain a majority of seven votes, while in the other three meetings its opponents had prevailed by a yet closer vote. For thirteen years the disease appeared at different times. In 1785 it was voted, 33 to 15, "that inoculation be not practiced in this town," and it was not till 1787 that the opposition in Middletown finally yielded, and the Council ordered that a family in which the disease had appeared should be inoculated.

On the 4th January, 1775, it was "Voted, that John Barker, Wm. Stoddard, Esqr., Capt. James Potter, Mr. Isaac Smith, Capt. Wm. Taggart, Mr. Nicholas Easton, and Mr. Joshua Barker be a committee of correspondence for this town, agreeable to the eleventh article of the Continental Congress." On 29th August, ten more were chosen as a "Committee of Inspection." The next year was one of alarm, and of active military preparation. The town memorialized the Assembly in February in regard to its exposed position. In April it received two field pieces from the State, and organized an artillery company, with John Bull as captain and Elisha Allen, lieutenant. In June, forty bushels of salt at six shillings, and one thousand pounds of wool, at two shillings, were bought for the town. In September a bounty of forty-two shillings was voted to privates who furnished their own blankets, and forty-eight shillings

to those who furnished all their equipments. The names of ten enlisted men appear on the records September 21st. These were recruits for Col. Richmond's regiment, then at Newport. On 23d November the clerk was instructed to remove the records in case of danger. The peril was now imminent. On December 2d a bounty of forty-two shillings was voted to men enlisted for three months in Col. Sayles' regiment. This was the last town meeting for thirty-seven months, for on that day a British fleet of eleven ships, under Sir Peter Parker, appeared off Block Island, and on the 8th, 6000 British troops landed at Greensdale, in this town, and after a night of pillage, marched into Newport. The enemy held the island till October 25th, 1779, notwithstanding two attempts to dislodge them: an abortive effort in October, 1777, under Gen. Spencer, and Sullivan's expedition, resulting in the brilliant but fruitless victory of 29th August, 1778, which received the high encomium of Lafayette, that "it was the best fought action of the war." This town was the scene of many gallant deeds during that period to which we can barely refer. The daring capture of Prescott by Col. Wm. Barton on the night of July 9th, 1777, occurred just north of the town line in Portsmouth. The less known, but scarcely less courageous conduct of Isaac Barker of Middletown, is worthy of commemoration. Pretending to be a tory, he remained on his farm upon the east side of the island, in plain sight of the Seacommet shore. A British colonel was quartered at his house, from whom Barker often learned the designs of the enemy. A system of signals was arranged between him and Lieut. Chapin of Sherburne's regiment, stationed on the opposite shore, by means of bars and a stake in a stone wall, which could be seen from Seacommet with a spy glass. The farm was near North point towards

the end of which is a ledge of rocks wherein was a crevice used by Barker as a post-office. In this crevice he would deposit a letter at night when anything of importance was to be communicated, and the next day would arrange the signal at the bars. Chapin would then come over in a boat by night and get the letter. This plan required great courage and address, but was successfully practiced by Barker for fourteen months, from August, 1778, till the British left the island, although at the constant risk of his life. Several times he narrowly escaped discovery. On the 15th August, 1778, Sullivan's army advanced within two miles of the hostile lines, which extended from Tonomy hill to Easton's pond. That night a detachment fortified Honeyman's hill, within half a mile of the first line of British works on Bliss's hill. For five days a continual cannonade was kept up along the whole line, and the enemy were driven from some of their outposts. The sudden departure of the French fleet alone prevented the capture of the whole British army at that time. On the 28th October the gallant exploit of Major Silas Talbot in capturing the Pigot galley, then blockading the east passage, added another to the revolutionary events of the town.

On the 4th January, 1780, the town meetings were resumed, and the records were restored from the custody of Thomas Gould, and on the 19th, temporary town officers were elected. May 24th a tax of £200 was laid, and a month later, three men were enlisted at a bounty of fifty silver dollars each. In September, five men were enlisted for three months. At this time fifty dollars of Continental money were equal to one silver dollar, or five shillings of State money. In two years the depreciation of paper was so rapid that a silver dollar was worth twenty-two dol-

lars of paper, and taxes were laid in silver money. The last levy of troops was on March 9th, 1782, for 259 men to recruit the State battalion for nine months. The proportion of Middletown was three, and thirty pounds was voted to them in lieu of government pay.

When the war was over, measures were adopted to encourage immigration, and in April, 1784, the Representatives were instructed "That absentees from this or any other of the United States of America, appearing to be men of good morals and likely to become good and profitable members of society by their industry, or their stock, be admitted as citizens of this State." In 1785, the January town meetings were discontinued, and jurors were ordered to be drawn in August. The paper money delusion revived with the advent of peace, and in February, 1786, the town petitioned the Assembly for an "emission of paper money to be founded on land security," and instructed its Representatives to urge a repeal of the act prohibiting trade with the English colonies.

The struggle for the adoption of the Constitution was a bitter one in this State, and was involved with the paper money question. On 29th March, 1788, at a special meeting called by Act of Assembly, the vote on the Constitution was six ayes to forty noes. It was resolved that paper be no longer legal tender between individuals except for payment of legal process—that the statute of limitations on notes and book debts for two years be repealed, or the time lengthened, and that the statute of redemptions of real estate be lengthened. In December the Constitution was again rejected. On 19th October, 1789, the vote was three in favor to thirty-three against it. February 8th, 1790, Joshua Barker and William Peckham, Jr., were chosen delegates to the Constitutional Convention to sit at South Kingstown in March. April 21st

it was voted "That this meeting do approve of the Bill of Rights and amendments submitted by the late Convention, and the delegates of this town are hereby instructed to use their votes and influence for adopting the Constitution of the United States if the said Bill of Rights and said amendments first become a part of the said Constitution, together with the following additional amendments, viz: That the pay of the Senators and Representatives be ascertained and paid by their respective States, and they recalled when their respective Legislatures may think proper, and others appointed in their stead; and otherwise that the said delegates be and they hereby are instructed to oppose an adoption thereof." The strong States rights feeling of the people appeared with special force in the rural districts. But wiser counsels finally prevailed, and on the 29th May, the day on which the Constitution was finally adopted in the Convention at Newport by a vote of thirty-four to thirty-two, the town voted "That the instructions heretofore given to the Delegates respecting the proposed Constitution be recalled. Voted, That the Delegates of this town be and they hereby are instructed to use their influence and votes in the Convention now sitting at Newport for the adoption of the Constitution which hath been already adopted by twelve States." Under these instructions Wm. Peckham resigned, and Elisha Barker was elected as a Delegate, thus securing the adoption of the Constitution by the vote of this town.

In those days the members of the General Assembly were paid by the towns, and six shillings a day, while in actual attendance, was fixed as the salary. This was amended in 1794, to be payable only "when called off the island and not without;" so that for a session in Newport or Portsmouth the service of the Middletown members was gratuitous; but ten years later the pay was fixed at one dollar a day "on or

off the island." In 1797 a committee was appointed to define and run the north boundary line of the town in connection with a committee from Portsmouth. The following April they made their report:

"Town meeting, April 18, 1798. Report of North boundary Committee. The subscribers, committees from the towns of Portsmouth and Middletown to ascertain the bounds between said towns, have accordingly met and examined the records respecting the said boundaries, and other evidences that offered—Have agreed upon the following partition line viz—Beginning at the East shore at a point measuring 240 rods northward from a brook now called Stony brook near Joseph Taggart's house, which we judge was formerly called Sachuest river, where we made a monument by a heap of stones on a small flat rock even with the surface of the earth, on land belonging to John Holmes, and from thence proceeded on a course North  $39^{\circ}$  West, by the magnetic needle, to the northerly part of a large rock adjoining the road near Chase's mill, from thence continuing the same course to the blacksmith's shop on the east road, at the south of the chimney which now belongs to Mitchell, and from thence altering the course to North  $45\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  West, by the said needle, to a monument erected on the west side of the road opposite to the south end of the house of Wm. Brightman, formerly built by Oliver Cornell, deceased, and from thence on a course North  $40\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  West, by the said needle, to a round rock on the west side of the island marked N. P. on the top thereof, which now lies below high water mark against land formerly belonging to John Coggeshall, now the property of the heirs of Aaron Sheffield, deceased. All which we submit to the said towns. In witness whereof we have set our hands at Middletown the 17th of the 4th month called April, 1798.

Thomas Coggeshall } Committee  
John Gould } for  
Benjamin Gardner } Middletown.

Thomas Potter. } Committee  
Abrm. Anthony jr. } for  
Thomas Cory jr. } Portsmouth.

Voted, that the above and foregoing report be received and accepted by said meeting, and also voted that John Gould Esqr. be appointed to join in a committee with one man from

the town of Portsmouth appointed for the purpose of setting up sufficient standing boundaries in the aforesaid division line."

In May, 1799, the number of councilmen, hitherto six, was reduced to five, and has so remained to the present time. In 1802 an excellent act to encourage the growth of trees and the beautifying of the roads was passed, enabling the owners of land to set out trees on the highways within one foot of their front line, and securing such trees to the owners of the land and to their heirs. In May, 1804, the time for town elections was changed to the third Wednesday in June. The controversy as to Sachuest beach was renewed in 1805. A committee reported that the land adjoining the beach was the property of the town. Benjamin Easton claimed it, and in October a report was made against Easton's claim, and the town voted to defend its citizens in taking sand and seaweed from the east end of the beach. In April, 1809, the most complete highway act yet adopted was passed. It required all repairs to be made between the third Wednesday of May and the last Monday of September—surveyors to be chosen the third Wednesday of April and to report at April town meeting the condition of roads and estimates for repairs—said tax to be ordered then and to be assessed within three weeks—surveyors to give two days' notice to parties working the roads—commutation to be at the rate of twelve and a half cents an hour for a man with a hoe or shovel, or for a pair of oxen and a chain—three cents an hour for a cart, boys from twelve to eighteen years of age, half price—surveyors to be paid one dollar a day, and a plow and turnpike shovel to be furnished to each of the seven districts. In 1813 the Supreme Court decided that the charity farm was taxable. A town house had long been needed. As

early as 1795 a petition to the Assembly for a lottery grant for this purpose had been presented but withdrawn. It was built in 1813 and June 1st, 1814, the council reported the cost to be \$1005.13.

The war with England was now at its height, and Middletown claimed its share in the glory and the suffering of that second war of independence, the struggle for the freedom of the seas. The affair of the *Nimrod* at Smith's beach demands special notice in this place.

The British man-of-war, *Nimrod*, of eighteen guns, chased a Swedish brig, with a cargo of molasses from the West Indies, into the east passage, one afternoon at the end of May, 1814. The brig ran aground on the third beach. The crew escaped in their boats, and hid in the sand hills, leaving on board the captain, who could not swim. Next morning men came out from Newport, and the fort, with one six pound gun, on to the beach. The *Nimrod* came in again and fired on the brig some three hundred shots. No harm was done till the next to the last shot, which killed John E. Smith, and took off the leg of Isaac Barrett, who had gone out to the brig in a boat and brought off the captain to the shore. It was a ricochet shot. The victim's brother, Abner Smith, then a lad of twelve years, was standing close beside him when he was killed. Abner Smith now lives in Michigan, near Ann Arbor, and on a visit which he made a year ago to his old home, gave this narrative of the affair to the writer. Isaac Barrett recovered from his wounds, and is still, or was lately, living in New Bedford, and wearing a wooden leg. The artillery compelled the *Nimrod* to put to sea, and relieved this part of the coast from further annoyance.

The following action was taken by the town in consequence of this affair: "The town of Middletown at their

meeting, June 1, 1814, Taking into consideration the melancholy circumstances of the death of John E. Smith, occasioned by an act of violence from one of the British armed vessels: as a mark of respect and condolence with the family of the deceased, have voted that the funeral expenses be paid by said town, and hope that this mark of respect for the brave but unfortunate young man who fell in defence of the rights of his fellow citizens will be received with the same cordiality with which it is offered. Voted that Alanson Peckham and Giles Manchester, Esqrs. be a committee to carry the above resolution into effect."

October 22d, a committee was appointed to consult with the committee of defence of Newport as to "what measures to adopt in defence of this island."

Party spirit ran very high during this period of war, the Federalists opposing the policy which had brought it on, while the Republicans sustained the Administration on every point, and unjustly charged their opponents with a hostility approaching to the verge of treason. At the October session the General Assembly elected four eminent citizens (1) to attend a convention at Hartford on 15th December to deliberate upon the condition of national affairs. The virulence of party and the patriotic feeling of the people are equally and curiously illustrated in the proceedings of this town at a meeting on 24th November: "Voted, that there be a committee appointed to make enquiry into the reasons of appointing delegates to sit in the Hartford convention, so called, and of their intention when in convention, and report at the adjournment of this meeting." A committee of eight was chosen who on 3d December reported a series of resolutions which were ordered to be published in the two Newport papers. The Mercury, a Federal paper, declined to print them, but in

1. Daniel Lyman, Benjamin Hazard, Samuel Ward and Edward Manton,

the next issue of the Rhode Island Republican we find the following :

“SPIRITED RESOLUTIONS  
OF THE TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN.

At a meeting of the freemen of the town of Middletown legally convened on the third day of December, 1814—

Taking into consideration the late proceedings of this State and other State Legislatures in appointing delegates to the Hartford Convention, the following resolutions were adopted with one dissenting voice only.

1st. Resolved ; That the Union of these States is essential to their safety from internal and external dangers—to the liberties of the people—to the independence of the nation—to the development of the faculties of the country, and to its growth to that degree of greatness and prosperity which such development would naturally lead to. That the Constitution of the United States is the bond of this Union, the pledge and security for their great blessings in possession and still greater in prospect. That all our public affections are devoted and wedded to that Union, and to that Constitution which secures it ; that we will defend both with our blood and treasure ; and succeed in the defence or perish in the attempt.

2d. Resolved ; That we feel all projects to dissolve the Union of these States, whether attempted by foreign foes or domestic traitors, or by a conspiracy of both, as death blows aimed at the life of our country in its vital part, and at all our dearest interests as bound up in that country. And we invoke the patriotism of all our fellow citizens of both parties and of every State, and the vigilance of our constituted authorities, to watch the dawnings of all such attempts, to arouse at the alarm of danger, and with their united energies to crush the detestable foe.

3d. Resolved ; That we view with much jealousy and distrust the proposed Convention to be held at Hartford on the 15th December inst. That the objects avowed are inconsistent with our duties as good citizens of a common country ; and there is reason to believe that the real object has not been avowed, and that this is to dissolve the Union of these States. We see an army forming in a neighboring State to be independent of the United States. We see in their public prints this nefarious object advocated by the patrons of this Convention, and we see no disavowal through the same channel.

4th. Resolved; That we disapprove and deprecate the Act of the General Assembly of this State in appointing delegates to said Convention; that it was an unauthorized act and not within their commission as representatives of the people in our State Legislature; that the sense and instructions of their constituents ought to have been taken upon so novel, important, and questionable a measure; that it was highly inexpedient at this time, as holding the country up to the public enemy as torn, or likely to be torn to pieces by internal dissensions, and thereby giving him fresh incentives to persevere in the war and compel a submission to a dishonorable peace; that of all the States, Rhode Island should have been among the last to show any disposition to leave the UNION of the UNION, or to give any countenance to any project of separation. She has no security whatever; no, not for a moment in her own independent strength. The Union is the ARK of her safety.

5th. Resolved: that we will unite with all our fellow citizens of this State and all other States in watching the movements of said Convention; that we will co-operate with our said fellow citizens, and rally round our government in all measures to arrest and punish any attempts against the Union should they dare to make any.

ALANSON PECKHAM, Moderator."

In this case, as in so many others, a little patient waiting would have been no loss, since the Report of the Convention was a complete refutation of the malice of its enemies in their charge of seditious designs. The Convention recommended certain amendments to the Constitution. These were opposed by the townsmen who on 19th April, 1815, "Voted and Resolved; That the Representatives of Middletown be instructed to act and use all their influence in the General Assembly against receiving, allowing, or adopting the proposed amendments of the present Constitution of the United States, projected by the Hartford convention, so called. Also, Voted to instruct the Representatives to oppose pay being allowed, if asked for by the delegates to the Hartford convention."

In June, 1819, the time of election of town officers was changed to April. A part of Newport petitioned the Assembly to be annexed to Middletown, but the town opposed the movement. Three years later a similar petition from residents of Newport was rejected in town meeting by twenty-seven majority. The South boundary of the town was defined as follows:

“Town Meeting, August 26, 1823. Report of South boundary committee, Middletown, November 16, 1822.

The committee that was appointed by the towns of Newport and Middletown at their April town meetings, 1822, to run the lines between the said towns. Therefore the said committees beg leave to report the following. We met on the above date, all parties present, and proceeded to run the line, Thomas Cory, Surveyor. We began at the northwest end of said line, about ten rods above high water,—said end is in Wm. Roach’s land, adjoining James Chace’s farm, from thence we proceeded to run the line south  $19\frac{1}{2}$ ° east until it strikes the corner of Asher Robbins house on the west side of the road, from thence 27° degrees east of south until it strikes the creek on Easton’s beach where the bridge formerly stood, and so on that course into the sea, and for the better information of the towns name the several farms in Middletown through which the line runs. (Twelve farms named.)

James Stephens, Committee from Newport.

Alanson Peckham, } Committee  
Thomas Manchester, } from  
George Irish, } Middletown.”

In 1824 the first movement was made to form a Constitution for this State. Joseph Rogers and William Bailey were the delegates to the convention at Newport, held June 21. This town rejected the Constitution in October by a vote of ninety-six to one—George Irish casting the only affirmative vote. In 1826 the seaweed rights were put up to rent at auction, and the town agreed to defend suits against those who hired them. Ten years later the line was determined between the common lands and those of the N. Easton

heirs, and these were allowed to take sand on the beach. In the Presidential election of 1828 the vote of the town was for Adams 78, for Jackson 5. The movement for an extension of suffrage met no approval in the town, and in 1829 the Representatives were instructed to oppose it. In 1839, an evil which since that day has greatly increased, began to be felt, and a remedy was proposed in town meeting, August 27th. "Voted, that our Representatives in the General Assembly be and they are hereby instructed to use their influence to obtain the passage of a law limiting the time of each and every session of the General Assembly hereafter to be holden, to three weeks, and that all sittings of the General Assembly over three weeks 'shall be at the expense of the members of that body."

A renewed effort to form a Constitution for the State was made in 1841. Benjamin Weaver and Pardon Brown were chosen delegates to the convention to meet at Providence in November. The result of that convention, known as "The People's Constitution," was submitted to popular vote for three days, March 21, 22 and 23, 1842, and was adopted in Middletown by a vote of 152 to six. Its partizans claimed that it was adopted by the people, and proceeded to organize a State government under its provisions, with Thomas W. Dorr at their head. Its opponents denied the claim of its adoption as well as the validity of the proceedings held under it. Old party lines were at once obliterated in the face of an imminent and present peril. The "Suffrage Party" on one side upheld the new constitution. The "Law and Order Party" stood by the old charter until it should be lawfully superseded by another constitution, legally made and honestly adopted. Violence was appealed to in behalf of the "People's Constitution," and an armed attempt was made to

overthrow the existing institutions of the State. The revolution of feeling in Middletown, and throughout the State, was sudden and complete. The citizens rallied to suppress a lawless and causeless rebellion, whose chief support was derived from abroad. To Middletown belongs the honor of raising the second cavalry corps organized in the State to sustain the government. It was commanded by Col. Nathaniel Greene, a grandson of the Revolutionary General. As soon as this insurrection was suppressed, the State government called a Convention, to meet at Newport in September, to frame a constitution. At a town meeting on the 30th of August, Pardon Brown and Abner Peckham were chosen delegates to that Convention. The new constitution was submitted to the people on 21st, 22d and 23d of November. The vote in this town was unanimous—one hundred in favor and none against it; while on the provision to admit colored men to vote, it stood eighteen to insert the word “white” to forty-seven against the restriction, a majority of twenty-nine for colored suffrage. The old charter, under which the State had existed for 180 years, gave place to the present constitution. It is memorable in history for many things, and among them for its vitality, as, at the time of its abrogation, it was the oldest constitutional charter in the world.

In 1846, bounds were set up on the line between Newport and Middletown, and in 1860 on the Portsmouth line. In 1846, school district number five was set off, and the next year the schools and school houses were placed under the supervision of the school committee, who, if they were opposed by the district committees, were to appeal to the State Superintendent under the new law of 1845, reorganizing the schools. The last serious disagreement in regard to the schools took place in 1853, when on 20th June the school

committee petitioned the Council against the management of the two six-acre school lots, alleging an unfair distribution of the proceeds of these lands, in that the north lot was applied solely to district number one, leaving the south lot alone to the other four districts. In reply, the Council, on the 15th of August, decreed that the rents derived from these lands "shall be appropriated to the schooling and educating of all the children of all the citizens and inhabitants of the town." An appeal from this decision was taken in behalf of district number one. The decree of the Council was overruled and the appeal sustained by the Supreme Court. In 1855 the present bridge over the creek on Easton's beach, was built by conjoint action with Newport, at a cost of \$550.

In June, 1853, Nathaniel Greene and Augustus Peckham were appointed as delegates to a Convention proposed to be held in Providence, on 9th of August, to amend the Constitution of the State. At this meeting 81 voted against a Convention and five for it. In November the vote on the same question was 103 noes to 7 ayes. The next year, Nov. 7th, 1854, five proposed amendments to the Constitution having been put out by the Assembly to be voted for by the people, they were rejected in Middletown by an average vote of nine in favor to fifty-two against them. A similar attempt to amend the Constitution was rejected two years later by about one hundred majority. The disposition to tamper with existing institutions has never met with much encouragement from the farmers of the State.

The great Southern rebellion aroused the spirit of the people in defence of the national government, as nineteen years before they had rallied to preserve their domestic institutions. Recruiting for the Union army was active, and military organizations were formed. A company of infantry

was organized, commanded by Captain Benjamin Howland. In October, 1861, a bounty of twenty dollars was given to each recruit for the national forces, and if married, and having a family, ten dollars were given to the wife and three dollars for each child under fourteen years of age. In July, 1862, \$125 bounty was voted to each one of the town's quota of eighteen men, and this sum was doubled two weeks later. The full quota was received and paid on 15th August. On the President's second call for 300,000 men, a bounty of \$350 was voted.

In October, 1863, another attempt to enlarge the suffrage by an amendment to the Constitution was rejected by a vote of 13 to 35. The next effort in this direction in 1871, proposed to enlarge the suffrage, to abolish the registry tax, and to provide against sectarian schools. The two former amendments were rejected by decided majorities in a very small vote, while the latter was adopted by a vote of eighteen to nine. The first two of these amendments were again proposed and voted upon at the recent election, November 7th, 1876, together with another of less importance. This was the seventh time within twenty-three years that the townsmen had been called out to vote upon questions of amendment to the Constitution. In this last trial the rejection of all three of the articles by large majorities conveyed a decided rebuke to the spirit that is perpetually at work to revise the fundamental law. The Presidential vote at the same time stood 148 Republican, 22 Democratic.

Since the final disappearance of the small pox, at the beginning of the century, no serious epidemic has disturbed the health of the town. In 1865 the spread of pleuro-pneumonia among cattle caused some alarm. The Council appointed commissioners to inspect infected cattle, and to require the

owners to isolate them, under a penalty of twenty dollars for neglect to do so, or for allowing them to run at large. This ordinance was re-enacted in January, 1871.

In a town wholly occupied in agricultural pursuits there are few public works or private enterprises to require notice. In 1850, leave was granted to a telegraph company to erect poles along the east, or main road, and in 1862 the Old Colony Railroad Company built a line of railroad down the west side of the island from Fall River to Newport, skirting the western shore of the town. In August, 1864, a tract of eight acres was bought for \$2500, to be laid out as a cemetery, and \$1500 were appropriated for this purpose during the year. In April, 1869, \$500, from the sale of lots, were voted for further improvement of the grounds.

The increase of population has been very slow. Beginning with 680 in 1748, it had only increased to 840 at the first United States census of 1790, and at the census of 1782, near the close of the Revolution, had actually fallen below the starting point, being but 674. In the next half century it did not hold its own, having lost ten in that period. Since 1850 it has gained a little, although there was a decline between the State census of 1865 and the National census of 1870. The present population, by the census of last year, was 1074. (1)

The increase in the value of real property has been greater than that of population, although the commercial revulsion, which commenced in 1867, made heavy inroads upon the personal property of the town. A comparison of the assessors' valuations in 1867, the first year in which the tax book

1 Table of population as shown by the sixteen censuses since the incorporation of the town. See census of R. I. for 1865, p. 32.

1748 680	1755 778	1774 881	1776 860	1782 674	1790 840	1800 913	1810 976	1820 949
1830 915	1840 891	1850 830	1860 1012	1865 1019	1870 971	1875 1074		

was printed, with those of the past year, will illustrate this remark. The value of personal estate in 1866 was \$531.200, which was reduced by \$64.700 the next year. The panic of 1873 still further reduced it to \$378.600 in the valuation of 1874, the lowest point in the decade. In 1876 the personal valuation was \$394.300, showing a decline of \$136.900 in the ten years. The valuation of real estate in 1866 was \$1.164.650, and in 1876, \$1.555.850, a gain of \$391.200, and showing an advance in the total valuation of \$254.300 in the ten years.

The area of the town is 12.7 square miles or 8128 acres.

The town has never sought to avail itself of the great natural advantages which it possesses. With a soil and climate which two centuries ago gave to this island the name of "the Eden of America": with a surface so diversified by hill and valley that every few rods presents a new and delightful prospect of land or water, and opens to the view fresh surprises of hill and dale, rugged rocks or sandy beach: with the broad Atlantic on the south, the beautiful island on the north, and the fine expanse of Narraganset bay washing either shore, while the fair old city of Newport, now the loveliest watering place in the world, rises close at hand, it needs but a little of the enterprise of commercial communities to make Middletown an ideal home for all that is refined and elegant in our civilization. Slowly, but at last, the town appears to be awaking to an understanding of its possibilities. New roads are projected to give access to spots whose beauty has too long been concealed. A broad avenue extending north from Tonomy hill, (1) near the western shore,

1. The name of this hill is properly Wonometonomy, and by abbreviation Tonomy, from the last independent chief of the Acquednecks tribe, who occupied and gave name to this island. Long before the arrival of the English Tashtas-nuck, the warlike chief of the Narragansetts and father of Canonicus, and great-uncle of Miantonomi, subdued the Acquednecks. Tradition points to this hill as the residence of the Acquedneck Sachem, and for him it was named. "Tannamany" hill is a popular perversion of the name.

and another along the beaches, sweeping close under the Hanging rock, to connect with Indian Cliff avenue on the eastern side, are already planned, and when completed will throw open to the public the most superb villa sites to be found in America. The fifty years which Bishop Berkeley assigned as the period when this vicinity would "blossom as the rose" in the sunlight of prosperity, have long gone by; but it seems less rash at the present time to fix that limit as one within which Middletown will become a permanent resort for those who value the beauties of nature, and the enjoyment of rest, above the excitement of city life.



## APPENDIX.

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### MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

#### DEPUTIES OR REPRESENTATIVES.

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These were chosen every six months for the May and October sessions down to 1843. The dates affixed are those of the election; and where there is an interval between the dates the same persons were re-elected till the next date.

1743, Aug. 30.	—, Aug. 30.
Daniel Gould, John Taylor.	Robert Barker, Jonathan Easton.
1744, Aug. 28.	1749, Aug. 29.
Robert Nichols, John Taylor.	Jonathan Easton, William Turner.
1745, Aug. 27.	1750, Aug. 28.
Thomas Coggeshall, John Taylor.	Edward Easton, Peter Barker.
1746, April 16.	1751, April 17.
Robert Nichols, John Taylor.	John Rogers, Peter Barker.
1747, Aug. 25.	—, Aug. 27.
Daniel Gould, John Taylor.	William Turner, Joshua Coggeshall.
1748, April 20.	1752, Aug. 25.
John Rogers, John Taylor.	John Barker, Handley Chipman.

1753, Aug. 28.  
John Barker,  
Thomas Gould.

1754, Aug. 27.  
Thomas Gould,  
Joshua Coggeshall, Jr.

1755, Aug. 26.  
Thomas Gould,  
William Turner.

1756, Aug. 31.  
Thomas Gould,  
William Bailey.

1757, April 20.  
William Bailey,  
Joshua Coggeshall, jr.

1758, April 19.  
William Bailey,  
John Barker.

—, Aug. 29.  
Samuel Bailey, Jr.,  
James Barker, Jr.

1759, Aug. 28.  
Samuel Bailey, Jr.,  
John Clarke.

1760, Aug. 26.  
James Barker, Jr.,  
Jonathan Easton.

1762, Aug. 31.  
James Barker, Jr.,  
William Bailey.

1763, Aug. 30.  
James Barker, Jr.,  
John Holmes.

1764, April 18.  
Gideon Coggeshall,  
John Holmes.

—, Aug. 28.  
Joseph Ryder,  
Samuel Bailey.

1765, April 17.  
Joshua Barker,  
John Holmes,

—, Aug. 27.  
Joshua Barker,  
John Bailey.

1766, April 16.  
Joshua Barker,  
John Holmes.

1767, Aug. 25.  
John Barker,  
John Holmes.

1768, April 20.  
John Barker,  
Thomas Coggeshall, Jr.

1769, Aug. 29.  
Edward Barker, Jr.,  
Thomas Peckham.

1770, April 18.  
Thomas Coggeshall, Jr.,  
Thomas Peckham.

—, Aug. 28.  
Thomas Coggeshall, Jr.  
John Holmes.

1771, Aug. 27.  
Joshua Barker,  
William Taggart.

1772, April 15.  
Joshua Barker,  
Isaac Smith.

—, Aug. 25.  
Nicholas Easton,  
Isaac Smith.

1774, Aug. 30.  
James Potter,  
Isaac Smith.

1775, Aug. 29.  
James Potter,  
Nicholas Easton.

1776, April 17.  
Joshua Barker,  
Nicholas Easton.

—, Aug. 27.  
George Irish,  
Nicholas Easton.  
(Records cease Dec. 2.)

1780, March 22.  
Nicholas Easton,  
George Irish.

1781, Aug. 28.  
George Irish,  
Oliver Durfee.

1782, April 17.  
Oliver Durfee,  
John Manchester.

1783, April 16.  
Nicholas Easton,  
John Manchester.

1784, April 21.  
Benjamin Gardiner,  
William Taggart, Jr.

—, Aug. 31.  
Nicholas Easton,  
Thomas Coggeshall.

1785, Aug. 30.  
Nicholas Easton,  
James Potter.

1786, April 19.  
John Gould,  
Thomas Coggeshall.

1787, April 10.  
Thomas Coggeshall,  
Joseph Coggeshall.

—, Aug. 28.  
Elisha Allen,  
Joseph Coggeshall.

1788, April 16.  
William Peckham, Jr.,  
Joseph Coggeshall.

—, Aug. 26.  
Joshua Barker,  
James Potter.

1790, April 21.  
Joshua Barker,  
Pardon Brown.

—, Aug. 31.  
William Peckham, Jr.,  
James Potter.

1791, April 20.  
William Peckham,  
Nicholas Easton.

—, Aug. 30.  
James Potter,  
John Holmes.

1793, April 17.  
Benjamin Gardiner,  
John Holmes.

—, Aug. 27.  
Easton Bailey,  
John Holmes.

1794, April 16.  
William Peckham, Jr.,  
Nicholas Easton.

—, Aug. 26.  
William Peckham, Jr.,  
Isaac Barker.

1795, April 15.  
Joshua Peckham,  
Isaac Barker.

1797, April 19.  
William Peckham, Jr.,  
Benjamin Gardiner.

—, Aug. 29.  
Benjamin Gardiner,  
James Potter.

1798, April 18.  
Benjamin Gardiner,  
William Taggart.

—, Aug. 28.  
Nicholas Easton,  
Easton Bailey.

1799, April 17.  
Samuel Manchester,  
Easton Bailey.

1801, April 15.  
Samuel Manchester,  
Joseph Rogers.

1802, April 21.  
Samuel Manchester,  
Benjamin Easton.

1805, Aug. 27.  
Isaac Barker,  
Peleg Sanford.

1806, April 16.  
Isaac Barker,  
Alanson Peckham.

—, Aug. 26.  
Samuel Manchester,  
Alanson Peckham.

1809, August 29.  
Isaac Barker,  
Alanson Peckham.

1810, April 18.  
Alanson Peckham.  
Thomas Manchester.

1812, Aug. 25.  
Alanson Peckham,  
Joshua Coggeshall.

1814, Aug. 30.  
Alanson Peckham,  
Isaac Barker.

1815, April 19.  
Alanson Peckham.  
Thomas Manchester.

—, Aug. 29.  
Isaac Barker,  
Peleg Sandford.

1816, April 17.  
Peleg Sandford,  
Thomas Manchester.

—, Aug. 27.  
Nathaniel Hazard,  
Alanson Peckham.

1818, Aug. 25.  
Nathaniel Hazard,  
Peleg Sandford.

1819, April 21.  
Alanson Peckham,  
Joseph Rogers.

—, Aug. 31.  
Giles Manchester,  
Peter Barker.

1822, Aug. 27.  
Giles Manchester,  
Peleg Peckham, Jr.

1823, Aug. 26.  
George Irish,  
Alanson Peckham.

1824, April 21.  
Giles Manchester,  
Noel Coggeshall.

1827, April 18.  
Joseph Rogers,  
Noel Coggeshall.

—, Aug. 28.  
William Bailey,  
John Chase.

1828, April 16.  
William Bailey,  
Nathaniel Wyatt.

1829, April 15.  
William Bailey,  
Augustus Peckham.

1830, April 21.  
Augustus Peckham.  
John Chase.

—, Aug. 31.  
William Smith, 1st,  
John Chase.

1831, Aug. 30.  
John R. Peckham,  
Pardon Brown.

1832, Aug. 30.  
John R. Peckham,  
Joshua Coggeshall.

1833, April 17.  
John R. Peckham,  
Thomas G. Rogers.

1837, Aug. 29.  
John R. Peckham,  
Benjamin Weaver.

1838, April 18.  
Benjamin Weaver,  
William Taggart.

1842, April 20.  
Benjamin Weaver,  
Joseph I. Bailey.

1843.  
Augustus Peckham, Jr.

1845.  
Abner Peckham.

1846.  
William Peckham.

1847.  
Peter Barker.

1848.  
Samuel Gould.

1850.  
Augustus Peckham.

1851.  
George I. Bailey.

1852.  
George H. Peckham.

1853.  
Abner Ward.

1854.  
William B. Howland.

1857.  
Augustus Peckham.

1858.  
John Gould.

1860.  
James Chase.

1861.  
William B. Chase.

1863  
James Chase.

1864.  
Abraham Peckham.

1865.	1874.
Thomas Coggeshall, Jr.	Eugene Sturtevant.
1871.	1875-6.
Augustus Peckham.	Nathaniel Peckham.
1872.	
Andrew J. Cory.	

### SENATORS.

1843.	1858.
Joseph I. Bailey.	Augustus Peckham.
1845.	1860.
Benjamin Weaver.	Peleg T. Sherman.
1847.	1863.
Pardon Brown.	William F. Peckham.
1848.	1864.
Nathaniel Greene.	William B. Howland.
1852.	1865.
John Gould.	Jethro Peckham.
1856.	1870.
Augustus Peckham.	John Gould.
1857.	1875-6.
John Gould.	Robert S. Chase.

### TOWN COUNCILS.

1743-4.	1747.
Peleg Smith,	Peleg Smith,
Joseph Holmes,	John Taylor,
Thomas Coggeshall,	Thomas Coggeshall,
James Barker,	John Allen,
Isaac Smith,	Isaac Smith,
Peter Barker.	John Rogers.
1745-6.	1748-9.
Peleg Smith,	Peleg Smith,
Joseph Holmes,	John Taylor,
Thomas Coggeshall,	Thomas Coggeshall,
James Barker,	John Allen,
Isaac Smith,	Isaac Smith,
John Green.	James Coggeshall.

1750.	1758-9.
Daniel Gould, John Green, Thomas Weaver, Jr., John Allen, William Peckham, Jr., James Coggeshall.	John Taylor, John Rogers, John Allen, William Peckham, Jr., James Barker, William Stoddard.
1751-2.	1760-1.
Robert Barker, John Green, Thomas Weaver, Jr., John Allen, William Peckham, Jr., James Coggeshall.	John Rogers, William Peckham, Jr., Joseph Ryder, Samuel Peckham, James Barker, Jr., John Clarke.
1753.	1762
Robert Barker, Robert Nichols, William Turner, John Clarke, William Peckham, Jr., James Coggeshall.	John Taylor, William Peckham, Jr., Joseph Ryder, Samuel Peckham, William Turner, Gideon Coggeshall.
1754.	1763.
Daniel Gould, John Taylor, John Rogers, Thomas Coggeshall, William Peckham, Jr. John Allen.	William Turner, George Cornell, Joshua Coggeshall, Jr., Giles Sandford, John Holmes, Joshua Coggeshall.
1755.	1764.
Daniel Gould, John Taylor, John Rogers, Thomas Coggeshall, William Peckham, Jr., James Barker, Jr.	William Turner, George Cornell, John Gould, Jr., Giles Sandford, John Holmes, Joshua Coggeshall.
1756-7.	1765-6.
John Taylor, Thomas Coggeshall, John Allen, William Peckham, Jr., James Barker, Jr., William Stoddard.	John Taylor, John Rogers, John Allen, William Peckham, James Barker, William Stoddard.

1767.

William Peckham,  
 William Stoddard,  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 William Turner,  
 John Greene.

1768.

William Peckham,  
 William Stoddard,  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 George Cornell,  
 John Greene.

1769.

William Peckham,  
 William Stoddard,  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 John Gould,  
 John Green.

1770-1-2.

William Peckham,  
 William Stoddard,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 John Gould,  
 John Green.

1773-4.

William Turner,  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 John Sloeum,  
 John Bailey,  
 Salisbury Stoddard,  
 John Clarke.

1775.

William Peckham,  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 Thomas Coggeshall  
 John Bailey,  
 George Irish,  
 Joshua Barker.

1776.

Thomas Coggeshall.  
 Joseph Ryder,  
 Nicholas Easton,  
 John Bailey,  
 George Irish,  
 Joshua Barker.

1780, March.

John Clarke,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Stephen Peckham,  
 William Peckham, son of S.  
 Joshua Barker,  
 Elisha Barker,

1780, May, 1781.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Stephen Peckham,  
 William Peckham, son of S.  
 Joshua Barker,  
 William Brown,  
 William Peckham, Jr.

1782.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Stephen Peckham,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 William Brown,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Robert Cornell.

1783.

John Rogers,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 Nicholas Easton,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Robert Cornell.

1784.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 Nicholas Easton,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Robert Cornell,  
 John Manchester.

1785.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 Nicholas Easton,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 James Potter,  
 John Manchester.

1786.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Joshua Barker,  
 William Peckham,  
 James Potter,  
 John Manchester,  
 William Taggart, Jr.

1787.

Nicholas Easton,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 James Potter,  
 Parker Hall,  
 Benjamin Gardner,  
 William Taggart, Jr.

1788-9-90.

Nicholas Easton,  
 James Potter,  
 Parker Hall,  
 Benjamin Gardner,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Joshua Barker.

1791.

Nicholas Easton,  
 James Potter,  
 Parker Hall,  
 Benjamin Gardner,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Oliver Durfee.

1792.

Nicholas Easton,  
 James Potter,  
 Parker Hall,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Thomas Manchester.

1793.

Nicholas Easton,  
 Parker Hall,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Benjamin Gardner,  
 Thomas Manchester.

1794.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Parker Hall,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Joshua Peckham.

1795-6-7-8.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 Parker Hall,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Benjamin Gardner.

1799-1800-1.

Thomas Coggeshall,  
 William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Thomas Coggeshall, Jr.,  
 John Irish,  
 Joshua Peckham.

1802.

William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 John Irish,  
 Joshua Peckham,  
 Peleg Sandford.

1803-4-5.

William Peckham, Jr.,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Alanson Peckham,  
 Isaac Barker,  
 Peleg Sandford.

1806.

Isaac Barker,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Alanson Peckham,  
 Peleg Sandford,  
 John Allen.

1807-8.

Isaac Barker,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 William Bailey,  
 Peleg Sandford,  
 John Allen.

1809.

Alanson Peckham,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 William Bailey,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 John Allen.

1810.

Alanson Peckham,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 William Bailey,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart.

1811.

Isaac Barker,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 William Bailey,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart.

1812-13.

Alanson Peckham,  
 Peleg Sandford,  
 John Irish,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart.

1814-15.

Isaac Barker,  
 William Bailey,  
 John Irish,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart.

1816.

Isaac Barker,  
 William Bailey,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall.

1817.

William Bailey,  
 Thomas Manchester,  
 Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Peter Barker.

1818.

William Bailey,  
 Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Peter Barker,  
 John R. Peckham.

1819.

Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Peter Barker,  
 John R. Peckham,  
 Giles Manchester.

1820-1-2-3-4-5.

Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 John R. Peckham,  
 Giles Manchester,  
 Peleg Peckham, Jr.

1826.

Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 John R. Peckham,  
 Peleg Peckham, Jr.,  
 Pardon Brown.

1827.

Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 Peleg Sandford,  
 John Chase.

1828.

Clarke Taggart,  
 William S. Peckham,  
 Augustus Peckham,  
 John Barker,  
 John B. Hall.

1829.

Clarke Taggart,  
 William S. Peckham,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 Jethro F. Mitchell,  
 I. Bailey Hall.

1830-1.

Clarke Taggart,  
 William S. Peckham,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 John Barker,  
 I. Bailey Hall.

1832.

Clarke Taggart,  
 Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Joseph Rogers,  
 Benjamin Smith,  
 William Taggart, Jr.

1833-4-5.

Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 Benjamin Smith,  
 William Taggart, Jr.,  
 Peleg Peckham.

1836.

Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Philip Anthony,  
 Benjamin Smith,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 Peter Barker.

1837-8.

Joshua Coggeshall,  
 Philip Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 Peter Barker,  
 William Peckham.

1839.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 Nathaniel Wyatt.

1840.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 William Peckham,

1841.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 William Peckham,  
 James M. Smith.

1842-3.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 Felix Peckham, Jr.,  
 Robert S. Chase.

1844-5.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 Robert S. Chase,  
 Jethro J. Peckham.

1846.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 Jethro J. Peckham,  
 James Chase, 2d,

1847.

Philip Anthony,  
 Peter Barker,  
 Pardon Brown,  
 George I. Bailey,  
 Stephen G. Barker.

1848-9.

Philip Anthony,  
 George Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 George W. Peckham,  
 George A. Brown.

1850-1.

George Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 George W. Peckham,  
 George A. Brown,  
 Thomas Coggeshall.

1852.

George Anthony,  
 Peleg Peckham,  
 George A. Brown,  
 Thomas Coggeshall,  
 James M. Smith.

1853-4.

George Anthony,  
 George W. Peckham,  
 Jethro J. Peckham,  
 Henry Taber,  
 William Peckham.

1855.

George Anthony,  
 George A. Brown,  
 James M. Smith,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Daniel Chase.

1856.

Nathaniel Peckham,  
 Resteome Peckham,  
 Noel Coggeshall,  
 Jethro Peckham,  
 Henry Taber.

1857.

Nathaniel Peckham,  
 Resteome Peckham,  
 Daniel Chase,  
 Jethro Peckham,  
 Henry Taber.

1858-9-60.

Jethro Peckham,  
 Abner Ward,  
 Daniel Chase,  
 William B. Howland,  
 James E. Wyatt.

1861.

Nathaniel Peckham,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Daniel Chase,  
 William Bailey,  
 James M. Smith.

1862.

Daniel Chase,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Thomas B. Buffum,  
 James M. Smith,  
 Hiram Barker.

1863-4.

Daniel Chase,  
 James M. Smith,  
 Hiram Barker,  
 Isaae Barker,  
 Charles H. Hazard.

1865.

George C. Coggeshall,  
 Hiram Barker,  
 James M. Smith,  
 Isaae Barker,  
 Charles H. Hazard.

1866-7.

George C. Coggeshall,  
 Gilbert L. Ward,  
 Benjamin Wyatt,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Augustus Peckham.

1868.

George C. Coggeshall,  
 Benjamin Wyatt,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Augustus Peckham,  
 Francis Talbot.

1869-70.

George Coggeshall,  
 Benjamin Wyatt,  
 Augustus Peckham,  
 Francis Talbot,  
 Stephen P. Barker.

1871.

George Coggeshall,  
 Benjamin Wyatt,  
 Augustus Peckham,  
 Francis Talbot,  
 William F. Peckham,

1876.

Noel Coggeshall,  
 Frederic A. Lawton,  
 Nathaniel Peckham,  
 Stephen P. Barker,  
 Gilbert L. Ward.

1872-3-4.

Benjamin Wyatt,  
 Noel Coggeshall,  
 Charles H. Hazard,  
 William F. Peckham,  
 Charles Peckham, 2d.

1875.

Noel Coggeshall,  
 William Bailey,  
 Frederic A. Lawton,  
 Nathaniel Peckham,  
 Stephen P. Barker.

## TOWN CLERKS.

Edward Easton, 1743-1749.  
 \*Edward Tew, 1749.  
 John Barker, 1749-1780.  
 Parker Hall, pro. tem, 1780.  
 Oliver Durfee, 1780-1783.

Thomas Peckham, 1783-1785.  
 Elisha Allen, 1785-1829.  
 William Smith, 1829-1839.  
 Joshua Coggeshall, 1839-1873.  
 Albert L. Chase, 1873.

\*Died in office.

## TOWN TREASURERS

Thomas Gould, 1743-1758.  
 William Bailey, 1758-1771.  
 James Barker, Jr., 1771-1774.  
 Stephen Peckham, 1774-1775.  
 Thomas Peckham, 1775-1783.  
 Elisha Barker, 1783-1802.  
 Giles Manchester, 1802-1830.  
 Benj. T. Sheffield, 1830-1832.

Elisha Peckham, 1832-1835.  
 Benj. T. Sheffield, 1835-1849.  
 Peter Barker, 1849-1855.  
 Stockford E. Tilley, 1855-1860.  
 Peter Barker, 1860-1862.  
 Felix A. Peckham, 1862-1870.  
 Joseph P. Barker, 1870.

**TOWN SERGEANTS.**

Peleg Rogers, 1743-1751.	Isaac Taggart, 1800-1801.
Lawrence Clarke, 1751-1754.	Elisha Barker, 1801-1802.
Thomas Weaver, 1754-1770.	James Coggeshall, 1802-1803.
Josh. Coggeshall, Jr. 1770-1773.	Wm. S. Peckham, 1803-1808.
William Weaver, 1773-1774.	Henry Peckham, 1808-1821.
Samuel Bailey, 1774-1780.	Asa Barker, 1821-1829.
Elisha Peckham, 1780-1787.	Thomas C. Wyatt, 1829-1842.
John Coggeshall, 1787-1788.	John Gould, 1842-1852.
Elisha Peckham, 1788-1789.	Henry E. Palmer, 1852-1853.
Richard Peckham, 1789-1799.	Gardner T. Slocum, 1853-1855.
Joseph Peabody, 1799-1800.	Albert G. Barker, 1855-1856.
Matthew Weaver, 1800 to Nov.	Gardner T. Slocum, 1856,







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